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## **CARDIN STATEMENT ON RELEASE OF THE PENTAGON'S "DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL" REPORT**

*Washington, DC – U.S. Senator Benjamin L. Cardin (D-MD) released the following statement after Defense Secretary Robert Gates and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen unveiled the results of a comprehensive, 10-month study on the potential impacts of repealing the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy. Senator Cardin is a cosponsor of a Senate measure that would repeal the law and allow gays and lesbians to serve openly in the U.S. Armed Forces.*

"The report released by the Pentagon makes it clear that 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' can be repealed with minimal impact on troop strength, cohesion, or readiness, despite some short-term challenges. 'There are gay men and lesbians already serving in today's U.S. military and most service members recognize this,' according to the report. The Senate now must act to ensure that these brave men and women can continue to serve our nation with honesty and integrity. Sexual orientation should never be used to determine the contributions any man or woman makes to our military. We should be grateful for the bravery and sacrifice of our soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines – gay or straight – who defend our nation."

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